

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brooklyn Store and Post Office
other names/site number VDHR File # 41-7

2. Location

street & number N. side Rt. 659 0.1 mi. W. of jct. w/ Rt. 820 N/A not for publication
city or town Brooklyn N/A vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Halifax code 083 zip code 24594

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Juliet Schenck 11/8/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<u> </u> entered in the National Register.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u> </u> determined eligible for the National Register.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u> </u> determined not eligible for the National Register.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u> removed from the National Register.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u> other (explain): <u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing Noncontributing

1 _____

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1 _____

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0 _____

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category

Subcategory

COMMERCE

department store

GOVERNMENT

post office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category

Subcategory

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
 walls WOOD

roof METAL
 other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past fifty years.

Period of Significance

ca. 1850-1903

Significant Dates

ca. 1850

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property approximately 0.5 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1	17 665200 4060430	3
2		4

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni</u>		
organization	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni, Preservation Consultant</u>	date	<u>August 1, 1995</u>
street & number	<u>PO Box 7825</u>	telephone	<u>(540) 366-0787</u>
city or town	<u>Roanoke</u>	state	<u>VA</u>
		zip code	<u>24019-0825</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name	<u>Virginia Gentry</u>		
street & number	<u>Rt. 1 Box 189</u>	telephone	<u>(804) 753-2439</u>
city or town	<u>Sutherlin</u>	state	<u>VA</u>
		zip code	<u>24594</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

**Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.**

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Brooklyn Store and Post Office is located in the village of Brooklyn in western Halifax County, Virginia, on the north side of a historic road linking the communities of Halifax and Danville (now Route 659). The recently rehabilitated two-story frame building is typical of nineteenth-century country stores in that its gabled front elevation faces the road. Exterior features include a stone basement level, weatherboard siding, and metal roofing. The first-floor interior has a large salesroom lined with shelves and an office to the rear, a plan that is repeated on the second floor.

The principal stylistic feature of the exterior is the Greek Revival pedimented front gable with its flush-board tympanum. The elevation below the gable has a three-bay window-door-window arrangement on both stories, with unusual four-and-four-panel double-leaf front doors on the first story. The entrance above has rough batten doors and an opening through which a pulley boom formerly extended. The first-story entry has a five-light transom. Stored in the building are front window shutters constructed of diagonally-pieced boards studded with nails. In place of the original six-over-six-sash windows--all of which had been removed prior to the store's rehabilitation--are modern eight-over-twelve-sash windows with divided lights (identical windows and one four-over-six-sash window appear on the other elevations).

The side elevations are windowless on the first story. The office section to the rear is narrower than the front sales area. On the east elevation of the office is a modern hollow-core metal door that replaces an early door with a panel arrangement similar to that of the front doors (this door is stored in the building). Modern stone steps rise to the front and side entrances. A stone chimney formerly rose on the rear gable, the base of which is still evident. The fieldstone basement level has an entry on the west side and several unglazed windows with iron bars.

The principal space on the interior is the salesroom, which occupies about three-quarters of the first floor and which retains many of its nineteenth-century accouterments. The salesroom walls are sheathed with flush boards that were painted green in the nineteenth century and are now painted red. The ceiling is supported by beveled joists. A counter with shelves underneath runs along the west wall of the room. In the rear northwest corner are floor-to-ceiling shelves extending nearly three feet in depth that were probably used to store bolts of cloth--a roller formerly mounted on a ceiling joist near these shelves served to display cloth. Wall-mounted shelving, perhaps for keeping small items, occupies the front southeast corner near a front window; similar shelves formerly occupied the front southwest corner. The front entry and the doorway to the office have molded and beaded surrounds, the former with one of an original two

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**Brooklyn Store and Post Office
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Description (continued)

wrought-iron holders for a doorbrand. To the right of the front door, glued to the wall boards, is a fragment of a postal notice dated 1895. This notice indicates the former location of the post office in the front southwest corner of the salesroom. A cloth banner advertising Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, and part of an upholstered dress survive in this room.

The small office or counting room behind the salesroom has an enclosed winder stair, modern flush-board walls and ceiling (replacing earlier plaster and lath), and a modern fieldstone mantel with an original stone hearth. The stair retains its original board enclosure under modern plasterboard and wallpaper. Under it is a two-panel closet door with graffiti on its inner side: "Barksdale & H . . .", "P. W. Mills February 7, 1879," "Bob Easley," and so forth. The six-panel door to the second floor has "W. W. B." written on it.

Original construction details are visible on the now unfinished second floor. Plates and corner boards are hewn and the studs and ceiling joists are straight-sawn; all are connected with pegged mortise-and-tenon joints. The store room over the salesroom formerly had flush-board sheathing, and the room over the office (probably used for living quarters) had plaster-and-lath finishes (structural members in both rooms are now exposed). More graffiti appears in the front room: "Wm Easley Esq," "Wm & [?] H Easley," and so forth. Other features include a six-panel door between the front and rear rooms, a modern stone stove back in the rear room beneath a Victorian mantel from a Halifax County residence, and evidence of a former suspended brick flue. The unfinished basement is said to have been used for the storage of whiskey. In front of the store, running along the road, is a modern wood fence, a section of which is included in the nominated parcel.

Integrity Statement

The Brooklyn Store and Post Office retains its original exterior and interior form, plan, and character-defining features. Most importantly, the building retains many of its diagnostic interior features, such as the early shelving in the salesroom, including the unusually deep dry-goods shelves. The building was under-utilized from the early twentieth century until 1994; consequently, nineteenth-century mail boxes were removed and sections of second-story ceiling joists were cut out to make mantel shelves for nearby residences. A 1994-1995 rehabilitation resulted in the installation of divided-light windows, stone steps, mantels, and interior sheathing.

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**Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.**

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Brooklyn Store and Post Office is a two-story frame country store located in the now mostly vanished community of Brooklyn in Halifax County, Virginia. Built about 1850, the store apparently operated in conjunction with the nearby Brooklyn Tobacco Factory, serving the small community of Brooklyn and surrounding farms. Recently saved from an uncertain fate and rehabilitated, the Brooklyn Store and Post Office preserves features such as Greek Revival detailing, original shelving and a postal notice in the salesroom, and evidence of a pulley for hoisting goods through a second-story entry.

Justification of Criteria

The Brooklyn Store and Post Office is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of commerce. The antebellum store preserves features illustrative of its period and type, among them a gabled front elevation, a salesroom with functionally differentiated shelving, an office with a room above that probably served as lodgings, and evidence of a pulley for hoisting goods through a second-story entry. The period of significance extends from ca. 1850, the approximate year of the store's construction, to 1903, the last year of operation for the Brooklyn post office and, presumably, the store. The property possesses local significance.

Acknowledgements

Several individuals aided in the preparation of this report. Virginia G. Gentry, the owner of the Brooklyn Store and Post Office, sponsored the project and recounted local lore concerning the property. Halifax County historian Julia Carrington and Colonial Williamsburg historian Ann Smart Martin provided information, and historian Gary Grant provided encouragement throughout the process.

Historical Background

A store has existed in the western Halifax County community of Brooklyn since at least 1835, when Joseph Martin noted its existence in his gazetteer. In 1828, the name "Brooklyn" (of uncertain derivation) was given to a post office opened at the location in 1825; the establishment of the post office probably coincided with the opening of the store.¹ In 1838, William M. and Sarah Ann Cabaniss sold a 438-acre tract at Brooklyn, which apparently included the store, to Sarah's brother, John Caleb Eldridge, for \$2,500.² John and his brother Richard F. Eldridge

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Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.

Description (continued)

Architectural Analysis

The Brooklyn Store and Post Office is representative of the country stores built in Virginia's small towns and rural areas during the nineteenth century. Like its formerly numerous contemporaries, the building is entered on its narrow end elevation, rather than on its side, as was typical of dwellings and earlier stores. The interior functional layout is also standard, with a large salesroom, a small rear office, a second-story storage room, and a smaller second-story room located over the office that probably served as lodgings for a clerk or other employee.¹ Other typical features include the sturdily constructed front-window shutters, the second-story entry and evidence of a pulley for lifting bulk goods into the upstairs storage area, and wooden shelving. The flush-board sheathing of salesroom walls and the plastering of office walls was apparently common in store interiors of the eighteenth century.² The deep dry-goods shelving is a feature that is not frequently encountered in nineteenth-century stores.

Another uncommon aspect of the Brooklyn Store is the narrowing of its width, corresponding with the transition from the front salesroom to the rear office. This gives the office the appearance of being an early addition. Structural and stylistic evidence suggests otherwise: the two sections of the store of the store are nearly identical in the detail of the construction; the stonework in the cellar shows no seam where a new rear foundation would have been added; and the exterior doors of the salesroom and office both feature related (and unusual) panel configurations. The two six-panel doors inside the store are earlier stylistically than the over-all Greek Revival character of the building, but this probably represents their reuse from an earlier building (or use of outmoded finishes in a less publicly accessible zone), rather than evidence of earlier construction incorporated into the present building.

Endnotes

1. Regionally, store counting rooms may also have doubled as lodgings during the late antebellum period. See sketch of the Franklin County store of Washington Dickinson in Franklin County Bicentennial Commission, *Bicentennial Reflections*, 46.
2. Hole, "Eighteenth-century Virginia Store Interior," 15.

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Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.

Statement of Significance (continued)

ran an ordinary at Brooklyn, as evidenced by the licenses issued to the pair during the 1840s, and John served as the Brooklyn postmaster from 1836 to 1848.³ John and Richard Eldridge and William Cabaniss also operated the Brooklyn store during the 1840s.⁴ In 1848, John Eldridge sold the 438 acres for \$2,650 to a mercantile partnership headed by William Easley.⁵ Easley probably had the present store built about 1850, as suggested by tax records.⁶

William Easley (b. ca. 1813-1816) and his wife Catherine S. (b. ca. 1820) lived in the household of local planter Beverly Barksdale, II, in 1850.⁷ Three years later, William Easley & Co. sold the 438-acre tract to Barksdale, who apparently operated the store in conjunction with his nearby tobacco factory after 1855.⁸ According to Beverly Barksdale's grand-daughter, Easley and Barksdale were partners, and they shipped their goods from Baltimore to a North Carolina port, thence up the Roanoke River to Milton, North Carolina, and overland to Brooklyn. "It is said these merchants carried a splendid stock of goods, in quality they equalled the city stores." The Brooklyn Store was apparently the largest mercantile emporium on the road between Halifax Court House and Danville.⁹

As Barksdale family tradition indicates, William Easley continued his association with the store after he sold it to Barksdale; in 1871, he was the only merchant listed for Brooklyn.¹⁰ Beverly Barksdale II's son, Beverly III, was also involved in running the business, as was William Haynes. In 1893, Beverly III operated the store with postmaster Charles Manning. According to one account, the last Brooklyn postmaster was William H. Barksdale (b. ca. 1867; Beverly III's son), who served from 1902 until the post office and store closed in 1903.¹¹ Afterward, the building served as a voting place, and it was used during the 1930s for dances. During the early twentieth century, another store was opened a short distance to the west. The small, one-story, frame store also survives and is used intermittently as a dwelling.

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Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.

Statement of Significance (continued)

Endnotes

1. *News & Record*, September, 1973; Kenneth Cook scrapbook.
2. Halifax County Deed Book 45, p. 73.
3. Halifax County minute book indexes; *News & Record*, September, 1973; and Kenneth Cook scrapbook. John C. Eldridge also served as postmaster from 1831 to 1836.
4. Halifax County minute book indexes and Minute Book 11, p. 205; Pezzoni, "Bowling Eldridge House." In 1843, as recorded in the minutes, Richard's slave Lafayette and another slave were charged with "feloniously breaking into the store house of Richard F. Eldridge and stealing . . . money banknotes and sundry articles of merchandize of the value of \$50."
5. Halifax County Deed Book 52, p. 438.
6. The value of buildings on the 438-acre Brooklyn tract stood at \$1,500 during the decade of the 1840s. In 1850, the value of buildings on William Easley & Company's property jumped to \$2,500 for "improvements increased." The tax records for the 438-acre tract are not entirely reliable (see discussion in Pezzoni, "Brooklyn Tobacco Factory"), however, the Greek Revival styling of the store and the name "William Easley" (the earliest name associated with the property) written over doors, on walls, and elsewhere support a date of construction during Easley's five-year ownership (1848-1853). Lizzie B. Ragland, who researched the store for the WPA, assumed the building was built in 1838 or earlier based on deed records.
7. Chiarito, *1850 Census of Halifax County*.
8. Halifax County Deed Book 55, p. 146; Pezzoni, "Brooklyn Tobacco Factory."
9. Information from Miss Ruth Barksdale in Ragland, "Brooklyn Store."
10. Boyd, *Virginia State Business Directory*, 263. Easley listed himself as a "dry goods merchant" in the 1870 census and a "retired merchant" in the 1880 census.
11. Kenneth Cook scrapbook; Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer . . . 1884-'5*, 285; and Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer . . . 1893-94*, 571.

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Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.

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Barnes, Ruby. "Brooklyn." Manuscript, South Boston Public Library, South Boston, Va.

Boyd, Andrew, comp. *Virginia State Business Directory, 1871-72*. Richmond: Andrew Boyd & Company, 1871.

Chataigne, J. H., comp. *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1884-'5*. Richmond: J. H. Chataigne, 1884.

Chataigne, J. H., comp. *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1893-94*. Richmond: J. H. Chataigne, 1893.

Chiarito, Marian Dodson. *1850 Census of Halifax County, Virginia*. Nathalie, Va.: The Clarkton Press, 1982.

Cook, Kenneth. Undated articles in scrapbook at South Boston Public Library, South Boston, Va.

Edmunds, Pocahontas Wight. *History of Halifax*. 1978?

Edwards, Richard. *A Statistical Gazetteer of the State of Virginia*. Richmond: Richard Edwards, 1855.

Franklin County Bicentennial Commission, *Bicentennial Reflections*. Rocky Mount, Va.: Franklin County Bicentennial Commission, 1986.

Halifax County chancery, court orders, deed, minutes, tax, and will records. Halifax County Courthouse, Halifax, Va. (tax records on microfilm at the Virginia State Library, Richmond.)

Hole, Donna C. "The Eighteenth-century Virginia Store Interior." Williamsburg, Va.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Inc., 1980.

Pezzoni, J. Daniel. "Brooklyn Tobacco Factory." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1995.

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**Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.**

Major Bibliographical References (continued)

_____. "Bowling Eldridge House." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1993.

Ragland, Lizzie B. "Brooklyn Store." Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory Form, 1937.

The Record-Advertiser (Halifax, Va.).

United States Census. Halifax County free population schedules, 1850 through 1880.

Virginia Business Directory and Gazetteer, 1917. Richmond: Hill Directory Company, Publishers, 1917.

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Section number 10 **Page** 9

**Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.**

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: A 17/665160/4060460, B 17/665200/4060480, C 17/665220/4060420, and D 17/665190/4060400.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Brooklyn Store and Post Office nominated parcel include only the historic store and exclude an adjacent modern sign, a cemetery, and the historic house known as Brooklyn (located on another parcel.)

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Brooklyn Store and Post Office
Halifax Co., Va.

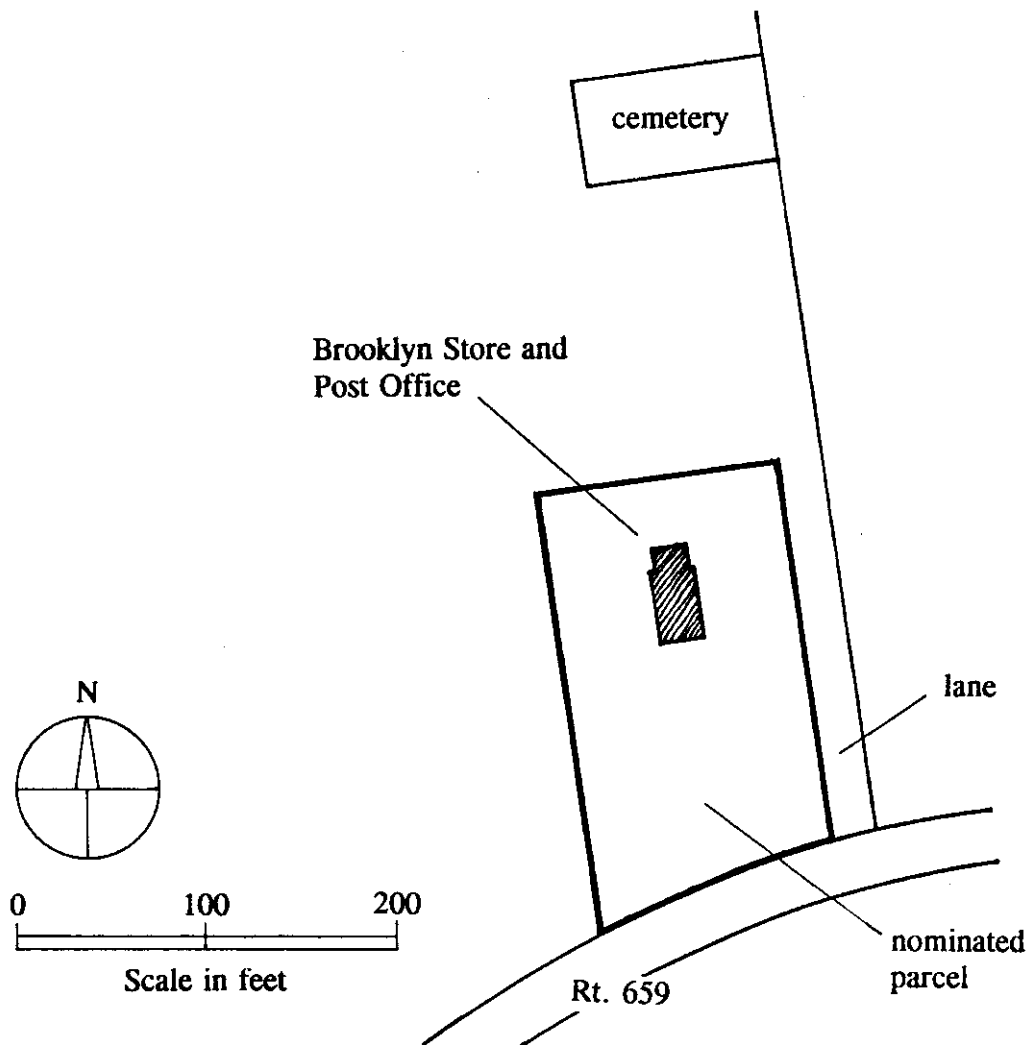
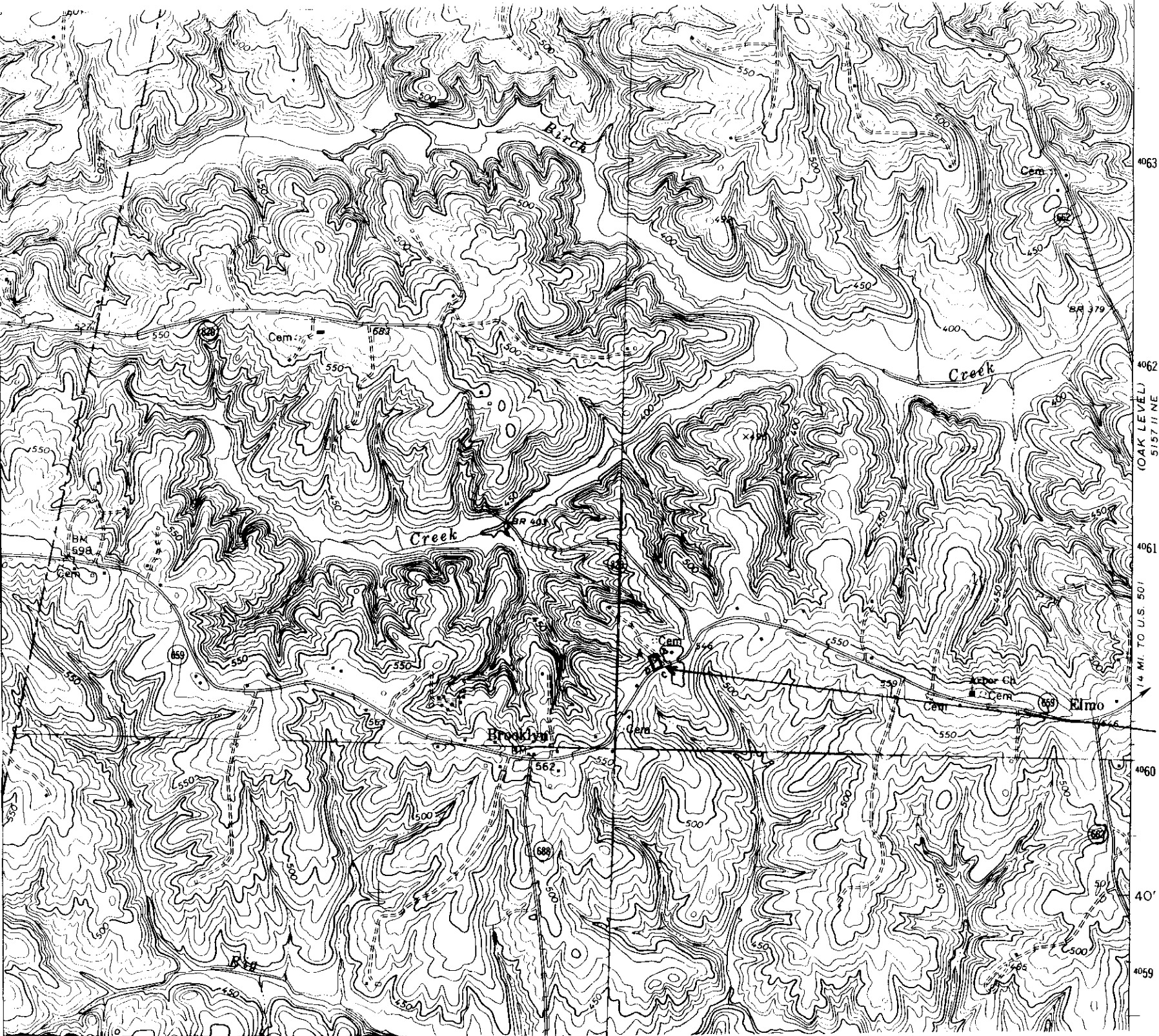


Exhibit A. Brooklyn Store and Post Office nominated parcel. Drawn from "Plat of Survey for Robert Paul Dwyer, Jr. & Sandra Russel Dwyer . . . June 12, 1990."



BROOKLYN STORE &
POST OFFICE
Brooklyn, Halifax Co., VA
UTM refs (zone 17):
E 665200
N 4060430